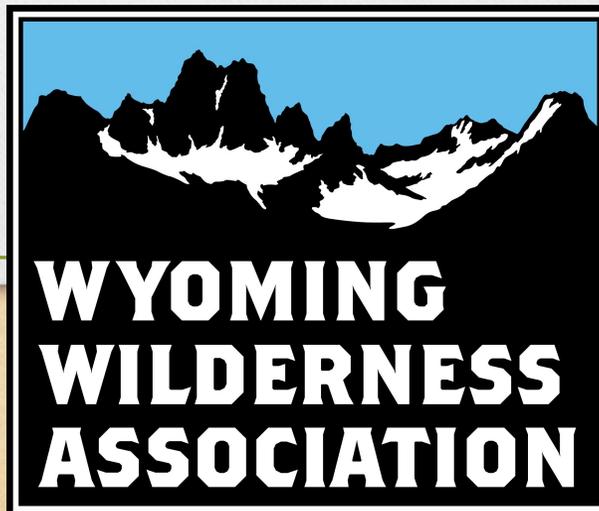


Stories from wild Wyoming

Stewardship as a tool for Wilderness advocacy



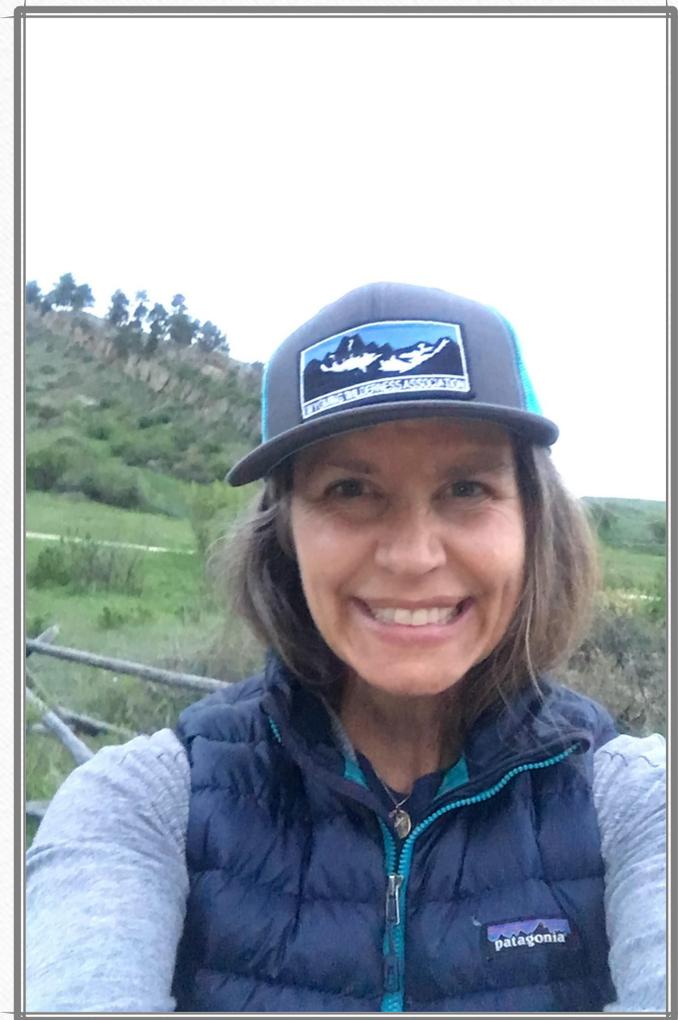
Peggie dePasquale

Former Associate Director



Khale Century Reno

Executive Director



WWA Pillars:

- Advocacy – Stewardship – Education-



Wilderness Stewardship Performance projects: How and Why?

- Agency partners: filling a needed niche & continue building relationships
- Covid19 response – outings for 2020 and 2021 – safe option & small groups can do on their own once trained
- WWA mission: use our stewardship pillar to get volunteers into our priority landscapes = future advocates!
- Provide an opportunity to pass on LNT principles organically in the field

Wilderness Stewardship Performance: Our stories - 3 Wyoming Wilderness Areas

- **Solitude Monitoring:**
- All praise the volunteer
- The flip side to our success
- Partnerships are the answer



- **Rapid Campsite Assessments:**
Using Survey 123 & Collector Apps



Solitude Monitoring

Bridger-Teton and Caribou-Targhee Numbers:

214 volunteer days across

20 Data Collection areas!

With only 72 WWA led volunteer hours

1,889 total volunteer hours

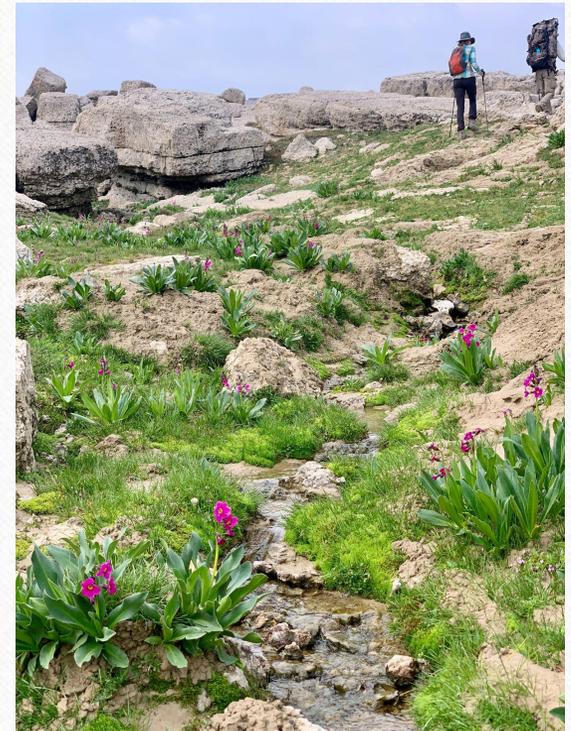
June – October 2021

*Will continue project into summer 2022



Key lessons from the Bridger-Teton and Caribou-Targhee Solitude Monitoring Project

- Even a very simple project can be filled with nuance and room for human error
- 4 hours in Wilderness is a lot of time for most people
- Maps and KMZ files would be extremely helpful for future data collection areas
- Every volunteer wants something a little bit different from their training and communication
- There is a wide variety of perceptions regarding human access and the intention of the USFS
- Partnerships are the foundation for success!



Quotes & Stories from participants



“I would never have gone to that trail had it not been for this project, and I am so glad that I have now explored in that place. It means so much to be a part of giving back to the public lands where I spend so much time.”

“The first group encountered was a working trail crew from MT, this was on my way out and on my return. The second group was a lost couple with their two dogs looking for the way to the Coyote Meadow parking area after hiking to Hidden Lake, but headed in the opposite direction. I set them straight and was met with gratitude. Head-high patches of fireweed, some harebells, paintbrush, goldenrod, lupine, yarrow, yampa, clover, cone flower, Richardson’s geranium, a few Engelmann asters, thick stem asters and shrubby cinquefoils and yellow agoseris lined the trail. Early summer wildflowers had gone to seed. Berries (serviceberry and twinberries) were scant. Chipmunks and squirrels chirped and darted. Stock sign and tracks lay on the trail. Birds vocalized. And solitude, while not total, ruled my hike.”

Cloud Peak Wilderness Bighorn National Forest

Wilderness Stewardship Performance- Rapid Campsite Assessments

Pilot Project 2021 Numbers:

4 organized trainings

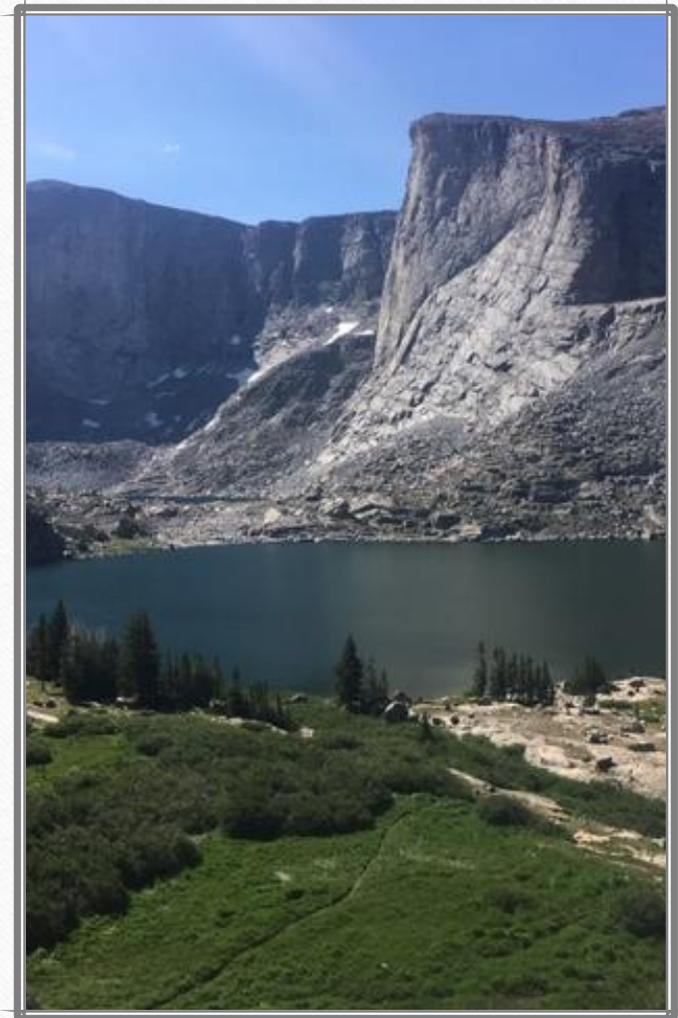
40 volunteers, 175 sites, 374 WWA led volunteer hours

640 additional individual hours

1,014 total volunteer hours

June – September 2021

***Will continue project into summer 2022**



Key lessons from Cloud Peak Wilderness -Rapid Campsite Assessments:



- Provide a “cheat sheet” to help volunteers navigate the Collector and Survey 123 apps. The sheet should exactly match the survey in the app as well as contain “pro-tips”
- Due to the mass of this project, the Forest Service will help identify “priority areas” for the summer of 2022 so that those areas get surveyed first, i.e. known high use areas and/or brand new sites of concern = wag bag example
- Volunteers enjoyed using the apps in the field, however having a backup paper copy to get data accurately in case of technical issues (which often occur) is very important.
- All volunteers reported they would engage with this project next summer as well as future citizen science projects in coordination with WWA and agency partners.
- Working with a point person from agency was fundamentally important to the success of this pilot project. This included: several meetings before engaging volunteers, trainings, and debrief meetings.
- Important for organization to be proactive in engaging agencies. They are quite busy, but are always grateful for the help

Quotes & Stories from participants

“Wilderness users like our ‘solo’ time. Stewardship projects like these force us to slow down and get to know others. It is truly a pleasure to help in areas of common interest.”

“Really important to give back, just need someone to organize us!”

“I know that historically WWA and the forest service have been at odds...I am grateful that we are moving past that with building rapport with each other.”



Another strategy with stewardship advocacy:
Bud Love Fence Removal Project:
adjacent to Rock Creek Recommended
Wilderness

2 days, 25 volunteers, 400 volunteer hours

80% hand rolling and packing it out of the hills. Total weight of the wire removed and recycled was over 2,000lbs and 2.5 miles of old barbed wire fence removed.

11.5 miles more to do!

*will continue this project in 2022



Lessons from Fence Removal Projects:

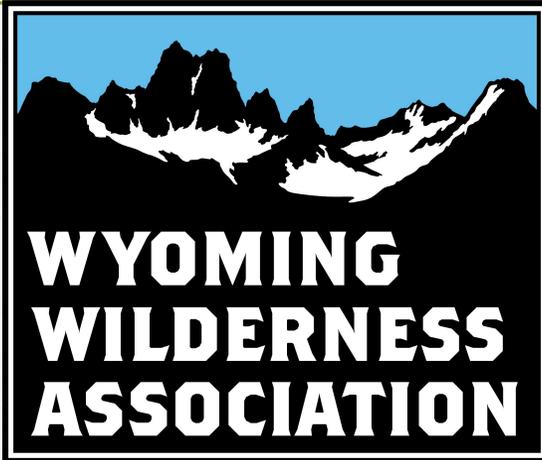
Board/supporters - easier buy in with this project because we are advocating for a future designation for Rock Creek

Coordination of three agencies involved on this landscape – Forest Service, BLM and Wyoming G&F

“A great chance for agencies to work together on same landscape, engage with volunteers and educate how all three intersect with the care and management -thanks for organizing us.”

-Agency partner





Closing and Next Steps



- **WSP projects** - once volunteer is trained, on own, great way to meet time needs of volunteer and organization
- **Building rapport** – with our agency partners *and community*, comments on proposed projects taken seriously
- **Agency capacity and Funding** – we are helping fill a need, inspiring other organizations, future survey opportunities
- **Volunteers** – needs, time, learn/understand land management, snacks and a hat = appreciation
- **Education**-exposes where has worked, i.e., not camping by water, fire rings, old data sets and also the need for further LNT education
- **WWA Board-Supporters** - time will tell as we use stewardship as an advocacy tool to get total buy in from this group
- **2022 Next Steps** – will continue these projects, enhance our recruitment of volunteers, tell our impact stories to inspire!

Thank you! Questions?
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